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in the form of an English grammar, on the model of Lowth's, but with several improvements.

"Being perfectly satisfied," says he, "that some principles of Lowth's grammar, which constitutes the body of Murray's, are entirely erroneous, I have prefixed a brief grammar to this dictionary, which is committed to my fellow-citizens as the mature result of all my investigations. It is the last effort I shall make to arrest the progress of error, on this subject. It needs the club of Hercules, wielded by the arm of a giant, to destroy the hydra of educational prejudice. The club and the arm I pretend not to possess, and my efforts may be fruitless; but it will ever be a satisfaction to reflect that I have discharged a duty demanded by a deep sense of the importance of truth.—It is not possible for me to think with indifference, that half a million of youth in our schools are daily toiling to learn that which is not true. It has been justly observed that ignorance is preferable to error."

These are the sentiments of a sincere enthusiast, the workings of a heart giving vent to its feelings in strong unqualified expressions.

The author proceeds to point out some of the more prominent errors, which he has undertaken to correct. A brief summary of these will afford a more satisfactory view of the improvements he proposes to introduce, than any observations that we could offer in the condensed form to which we are bound to limit our remarks.

1. The admission of the article as a distinct part of speech; it being, always and in all languages, an adjective. 2. The arrangement of words, particularly of some of those commonly called pronouns, adverbs, and conjunctions, in a class to which they do not belong. 3. The want of a correct and complete exhibition of the verb in all its modifications of mode and tense. 4. The imperfection of the usual rules of syntax.

In the commencement of the grammar, where he treats of letters, he defines consonants to be the characters that represent the junctions, jointings or closings of the organs, which precede or follow the vocal sounds, and calls them by a very appropriate term, articulations. We think that one step more would have led him to a very simple and complete analysis of this primary and essential part of his subject.

Letters express either sounds or articulations: sounds are either simple, which we call vowels, or compound which are designated diphthongs; and articulations, commonly called consonants, are either close or perfect, which wholly intercept the voice, and therefore stop, or terminate the sound, or imperfect, which do not entirely interrupt the voice, but admit a kind of hum or hiss, and are thence commonly called semi-vowels. This two-fold classification will comprehend the whole of the letters in every language, according to their formation by the organs of speech.

In the classification of words, or what are commonly called parts of speech, he alters the names of some, rejecting, of course, the article altogether. Thus he names the pronoun, the substitute; the adjective, the attribute; the adverb, the modifier; the conjunction, the connective; and the interjection, the exclamation. Knowing, as we do, how much the study of chemistry has been facilitated, and its advancement consequently promoted, by a judicious nomenclature, in which the term fre-

quently implies or leads to the distinguishing character, we cannot object to the same principle being applied with judgment and caution to other sciences, and we think that the changes in the present instance, though not essential, will be found to be useful.

In the comparison of adjectives, or attributes, Dr. Webster recognizes four degrees. The first denotes a slight degree of the quality, and is expressed by the termination *ish*; as reddish; brownish: this may be called the imperfect degree. The second denotes such a degree of the attribute as to constitute an absolute or distinct quality: as red, brown: this is called the positive degree. The third and fourth he defines and names, like other grammarians, the comparative and superlative.

With respect to one of Dr. Webster's general rules for spelling, we feel inclined to pause before we acquiesce in its correctness. "In verbs of more than one syllable, when the accent falls on any syllable except the last, the final consonant of the verb is not to be doubled in the derivatives; thus, *bias, biased, biasing; worship, worshiper, worshipping*. The same rule is generally to be observed in nouns, as in *jeweler, jewel*. These," continues the author, "are general rules: though possibly special reasons may, in some instances, justify exceptions." We cannot but think that his love for generalizing has made Dr. Webster limit too closely the extent of the exceptions to this his general rule, which will be found to require very many, and, among these the very words he has selected for examples.

The introduction contains an anecdote relative to the well-known Lindley Murray, which we notice particularly, because, if true, it ought to be known; and if untrue, it ought to be contradicted. Dr. Webster says, that in the year 1803, he received a letter from Lindley Murray, with a copy of that writer's grammar, soliciting remarks on it. Twenty years before the date of this letter, Dr. Webster tells us, that he had published the grammar we have already spoken of; but as it had been prepared on the model of Lowth's, and as subsequent researches had convinced him that some of Lowth's principles were erroneous, he suppressed this grammar after it had been published, from a conviction of the immorality of laying before the public what he knew to be false. In 1807, he published a new grammar on new principles, and with a view to answer Murray's request, though in a different manner, he sent him a polite letter with a copy of it. These never reached him; but Murray received a copy of Webster's grammar from another quarter, and soon after published a new edition of his own English grammar in octavo, in 1808. In it he states, that he had examined the most respectable publications on the subject that had recently appeared, and had, in consequence, been the better enabled to extend and improve his work.

Now, let the reader hear what Dr. Webster says in continuation: "on carefully comparing this work with my own grammar, I found most of his improvements were selected from my book. In the first edition of this work, (Lindley Murray's new edition of his English grammar,) the compiler gave me credit for one passage only, being nearly three pages of my grammar, which he acknowledged to be chiefly taken from my work. In the later editions, he says, this is in part taken from my book; and he further acknowledges, that a few

positions and illustrations, among the syntactical notes and observations, were taken from my grammar. Now the fact is, the passages borrowed amount to thirty or more, and they are so incorporated into the work, that no person except myself would detect the plagiarisms, without a particular view to this object."

We join with the writer, if his statement be true, in his protest against such a species of immorality. A man's reputation and character, and writings, are as much his property as his land; and it is to be hoped that correct morality will, in due time, place the protection of the former on as high ground as that of the latter.

NOTICES OF BOOKS.

The Plays of Philip Massinger. Adapted for Family Reading, and the use of Young Persons, by the omission of objectionable passages. Vol. I.—London, Murray.

THE works of the old English dramatists abound in displays of the most powerful imagination and the richest fancy, couched in language the most forcible and expressive; but their exquisite beauty is so often marred by coarseness of expression, (for the licentiousness which disgraced the stage in Charles the Second's days, was the corruption of a later and more vicious age,) that they have long lain neglected, as unfit for the perusal of the pure and good. Under these circumstances, the editors of the Family Library have resolved on publishing a selection from the plays of Massinger, Fletcher and Beaumont, Ford, Shirley, and others, omitting all such scenes and passages as are inconsistent with the delicacy and refinement of modern taste and manners. The present volume contains a *Life of Massinger*, and four of the eighteen plays of his which are still extant—namely, the *Virgin Martyr*, the *Great Duke of Florence*, the *Bondman*, and the *Maid of Honour*. These are accompanied with preliminary notices and explanatory notes, which we rejoice to see are not overdone. We congratulate the public on having works of such transcendent genius thus placed within their reach, divested of all risk of injury or pollution from the contact.

The Correspondence and Diary of Philip Doddridge, D.D. &c. &c. &c. Edited from the original MSS. by his Great Grandson, John Doddridge Humphreys, Esq. Vol. III.—London: Colburn and Bentley.

WE must do the Rev. Doctor Philip Doddridge, D.D. the justice to acknowledge, that from our youth up we had considered him a very tedious stupid sort of writer, but we did not think him quite so great a fool as he proves to be, upon a farther and more intimate acquaintance. We should add, moreover, that it would require a very considerable stock of personal merit, to atone, in our eyes, for having been the progenitor of his present biographer, and great grand son, John Doddridge Humphreys, esquire, who has inflicted upon us so many ponderous tomes of silly gossip about miss Kitty, and miss Jenny, and miss Mercy, and all the other misses, and kisses, and youthful follies of his great grandfather, the dissenting minister. We really believe Doddridge was a well-meaning, good sort of man, according to his gifts, which were not of the highest or most refined description; but why we should be pestered, at this time of day,

with these never-ending volumes of twaddle about him and his 'dearest creature' we cannot conceive.

Traits of Scottish Life, and Pictures of Scenes and Character. 3 vols. post 8vo.—London, Whittaker, Treacher and Co.

THESE volumes are said to be from the pen of Mr. Bennett, the editor of a judiciously conducted Glasgow newspaper, called the Free Press. There is nothing in them very striking or original; yet one daunders on with a quiet, dozy sort of satisfaction, *usque ad finem*.

The Stories are eighteen in number, and they are intermixed with divers songs, and poetical pieces of similar merit.

PERIODICAL LITERATURE.

Law Magazine.

WE have a selfish motive in noticing the last Number of this excellent Magazine, the leading article is headed "Eloquence of the Irish Bar," and does ample justice to the splendid merits of the many highly gifted men, who for the last fifty years have formed the brightest ornaments of their profession, and their country. But what is more gratifying to our feelings, the article in question is from the pen of an Englishman, and vindicates the character of Irish oratory from the ingenious aspersions of the Edinburgh Review, which in 1817, in criticising the speeches of Mr. Charles Phillips, denounced the school from which he came, and its style, of which according to the critic he was a fair specimen; we extract the following passage from the commencement of this article, which consists of a Review of Mr. Greene's report of the celebrated bottle-conspiracy case in 1823, heartily recommending the Magazine itself to the attentive perusal of all, particularly of our professional readers.

"Whatever might have been the state of opinion on this side of the channel, previously to October 1817, (the date of the article in the Edinburgh) however high the character of Irish oratorical effusions before then from that period it has certainly declined.—Ex illo retro fluere et sublapsa referri, and though after giving specimens of the forensic eloquence of England and Scotland, we naturally recur to Ireland, in order to complete the parallel, we are almost under the necessity of apologizing for adopting so very obvious, and, we humbly conceive, commendable a course. We are absolutely obliged to declare, at the outset, that the prevailing prejudice is a wholly groundless one, that we could select from the Irish bar as many models of chasteness as of fire, and that (setting aside Curran and Plunket, or allowing them to pair off with Erskine and Brougham,) a long list of names might be framed from it, which as orators and advocates in the best sense of the terms, neither England nor Scotland would, single-handed, find it easy to match."

ORIGINAL CORRESPONDENCE.

Paris, May 17th, 1830.

The chief topic of conversation during the last few days, has been the debut of Miss Smithson on Monday last, at the Opéra Comique in a little drama called *l'Auberge*

d'Auray. In this she plays the part of an English female, the wife of M. Montalban, a Frenchman, who is condemned to death by the republican soldiers then in the neighbourhood, on a charge of being a spy of the Vendéans—Miss Smithson endeavours to save him, and succeeds, after a variety of incidents of much stage interest, and which are carried on chiefly in pantomime, a few disjointed French sentences being all that she utters. Miss Smithson was very successful, and the applause bestowed upon her was at times enthusiastic. The drama itself has very little merit, beyond that of being short; and the favourable reception experienced by Miss Smithson, as well as her own talents, which are really of a high order, secured for her a thorough triumph. This young lady may, I think, now consider herself as fixed on the Continent for two or three years; for although the extreme heat of the weather, must soon cause the Paris Theatres to be deserted for two or three months, she has the prospect of an abundant winter harvest in town or country.

The following curious and rather interesting account of a new discovery, which was the result of chance, appears in the *Moniteur*: "a miller in the environs of Dijon, having put up new mill-stones, and wishing to clean them before they were used for grinding wheat, put a quantity of bran into the mill for the purpose of carrying away the sand from the stones; but not having sufficient bran at hand, he added some chipped straw—what was his surprise at finding a coarse, but excellent, wheaten flour result from this experiment—a quantity of it was instantly given to some horses, who devoured it greedily, and another portion being boiled up for the pigs, was equally relished by those animals; the miller even made a loaf of bread with a part of the flour, and it was eaten with a relish."

Some very curious tables have lately been published here, showing the comparative duration of life among rich and poor persons. In a list of sixteen hundred persons of the higher class, among whom are 150 sovereigns or princes, it was found that from 1820 to 1829, both inclusive, there had been 522 deaths, being a yearly average of 52.2. It was also curiously observed, that among the higher order of clergy, the deaths after the age of sixty or seventy, were much more frequent than amongst persons of distinction in different orders at the same period. Of the sixteen hundred persons thus selected in 1820, there

were aged from,	20 to 25	... 17
	25 to 30	... 36
	30 to 35	... 72
	35 to 40	... 86
	40 to 45	... 138
	45 to 50	... 232
	50 to 55	... 219
	55 to 60	... 172
	60 to 65	... 194
	65 to 70	... 167
	70 to 75	... 116
	75 to 80	... 73
	80 to 85	... 58
	85 to 90	... 19
	90 to 95	... 1

The other list, made at the same time, comprised 2000 persons, taken among the poor and working classes in the low quarters of Paris. It is not necessary to state the order in which they died, as the following comparative table

will show the frightful superiority of the number of deaths among them:

	Mortality on the rich list.	Mortality on the poor list.
From 25 to 30	0 0	... 2 22
30 to 35	... 0 85	... 1 43
35 to 40	... 1 20	... 1 85
40 to 45	... 0 85	... 1 87
45 to 50	... 1 59	... 2 59
50 to 55	... 1 81	... 2 58
55 to 60	... 1 68	... 4 60
60 to 65	... 3 6	... 5 76
65 to 70	... 4 31	... 9 25
75 to 80	... 8 9	... 14 59
80 to 85	... 11 58	... —
85 to 90	... 16 29	... —
90 to 95	same	... —

What a painfully instructive table this is!—Here we see the poor, even in youth, dying off rapidly in proportion to the rich, in the middle age; in further advanced life nearly doubling the mortality of their wealthier fellow creatures, who have comforts and enjoyments; and in extreme old age showing an entire blank. We are also assured, that of the number of deaths among these poor persons, three-fourths, at least, take place in hospitals.

To these tables is added another curious one of the ages of the reigning princes, and other distinguished persons in Europe:

Of 124 Princes, 12 have reached the age of 80.
28 Cardinals, 7 are 80, and 2 older.
34 Archbishops and bishops, 1 is 80.
313 Peers of France, 11 are 80.
272 Generals, 19 are 80, and 9 still older.
84 Ambassadors, 5 ministers of state, &c.
5 are 80.

The extraordinary part of this table, is that which relates to the bishops and archbishops—high feeding, probably, prevents them reaching a very old age.

London, May 18.

In the literary circles here, there is little new talked of, but the sudden discontinuance of the *Morning Journal*. This paper disappeared when at a number which although by no means sufficient to cover the expenditure, was larger than that of any daily or weekly paper that was ever dropped without being merged into some other concern—when the compositors left the paper, and new hands were taken in, the number printed was 890. In two days succeeding this change, the paper did not appear until some hours after the usual time, yet the number fell only twenty, so that when the paper dropped altogether, 870 copies were printed.

It is now said, but with what degree of truth I know not, that a large sum is subscribing for the institution of a new morning paper. The *Star Evening Paper* is for sale, the price demanded is £800, which would include types, lease of the house, &c. The number is very low, but there are several persons treating for the purchase.* This, however, is by no means a good time for newspapers, the best established cannot hold their ground, and the Sunday newspapers in particular, feel the pressure of the times, for the middling and lower orders who chiefly read Sunday newspapers, either cannot afford the expense, or the occurrences of the week are not sufficient to excite interest. In France,

* The *Star* was purchased in 1790 for between 4 and 500*l*. It rose successively to a daily circulation of about 4,000, yielding a yearly profit of 4,000*l*.